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Security Council

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Letter dated 14 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward the assessment of the work of the Security Council by the presidency of the Philippines in September 2005 (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Lauro L. **Baja**, Jr.
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 14 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Philippines (September 2005)

Introduction

The Republic of the Philippines, with its Permanent Representative, H.E. Mr. Lauro L. Baja, Jr., at the helm, served as President of the Security Council in September 2005.

The Security Council held 16 formal meetings and 12 consultations of the whole, adopted 9 resolutions, 2 decisions and 3 presidential statements, and issued 6 press statements during the month under review.

The highlight of the month was the historic gathering of the Security Council at the level of Heads of State and Government on 14 September 2005. At the summit the Council adopted a resolution on terrorism and another resolution on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. During the month, the Council also held a thematic debate on "The role of civil society in conflict prevention and the pacific settlement of disputes," where representatives of the civil society participated in the discussion.

The Security Council paid considerable attention to the African continent during the month. The Council heard important briefings on Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Sudan. The Council also heard briefings and discussed the latest developments on Afghanistan, Iraq and the Middle East. In this period, the Council held consultations with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations missions in these areas.

During the month the Security Council had an occasion to hear a briefing on the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and to take action pertaining to the exit strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The Council also extended the mandates of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan.

Africa

Burundi

On Monday, 19 September 2005, Carolyn McAskie, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, briefed Council members in informal consultations on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/586) on the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB). Ms. McAskie noted the cooperation of the players in the Burundian process, which presented a hope that the past crises would not be repeated. She said that the momentum must be maintained and stressed that the Forces Nationales de Liberation (FNL) must be brought into the process.

Council members noted with satisfaction the smooth transition towards the peacebuilding phase. Council members agreed, however, that much remained to be done to make peace irreversible, including bringing the FNL into the peace process. They also welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a partners' forum as the international mechanism for extending assistance to Burundi.

At the 5268th meeting of the Security Council, on Thursday, 22 September 2005, the President read out a statement (S/PRST/2005/43) on the situation in Burundi expressing support for the establishment of a forum of Burundi's partners to assist in the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in the country and provide a forum for coordination of international donors to support the reforms already accomplished.

Côte d'Ivoire

On Wednesday, 21 September 2005, the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) reported on the work of the Committee. He stated that members of the Committee had supported the proposal for the Chairman to visit Côte d'Ivoire (Abidjan and Bouake) and, if necessary, also Abuja, Nigeria. The purpose of the visit would be to gather information in relation to the mandate of the Committee under paragraphs 9 and 11 of resolution 1572 (2004).

At the conclusion of the meeting, Council members authorized the President to issue a press statement, expressing support for the proposed visit of the Chairman to the area.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

At its 5255th meeting, on Tuesday, 6 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1621 (2005), whereby, inter alia, the Council authorized the increase of military component by 841 personnel of MONUC.

At its 5271st meeting, on Thursday, 29 September 2005, the Security Council met with troop-contributing countries to MONUC. William Lacy Swing, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, briefed the meeting on the work achieved by MONUC and the major challenges ahead. General Gaye, MONUC Force Commander, said that MONUC was making progress in the establishment of a favourable political environment for the holding of elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Following the meeting, Council members convened informal consultations to consider the nineteenth report of the Secretary-General on MONUC (S/2005/603). Mr. Swing briefed Council members on recent developments, using an audio-visual presentation. Council members emphasized the need for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to maintain the electoral timetable, which served as a significant benchmark in the political process.

The Permanent Representative of France recalled the previous agreement of the Council to send a mission to the Great Lakes region under his leadership. He noted that the dates for the mission would be from 4 to 11 November 2005. Mr. Swing said that the timing of the mission would be favourable as the Council would be able to see the accomplishments regarding voter registration. The visit

would also be before the scheduled referendum and after the issuance of the new ultimatum to the armed militias in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At its 5272nd meeting, on Friday, 30 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1628 (2005) extending the mandate of MONUC until 31 October 2005.

Ethiopia/Eritrea

At its 5257th meeting, on Friday, 9 September 2005, the Security Council met with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Ethiopia and Eritrea, Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, provided a briefing on the latest developments in the area. Mr. Legwaila said that the situation in the temporary security zone had remained calm and stable, although the lack of progress in the peace process posed a threat to military security.

After the meeting, Council members took up in informal consultations the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2005/553 and Add.1). Mr. Legwaila emphasized that the longer the peace process was stalled, the greater the threat to the stability of the temporary security zone. He also said that due to the massive deployment of troops close to the border, there was a need to reconfigure the UNMEE military component within authorized limits.

At its 5259th meeting, on Tuesday, 13 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1622 (2005), whereby the Council decided, inter alia, to extend UNMEE's mandate for six months, until 15 March 2006, and to reconfigure the mission's military component.

Guinea-Bissau

On Thursday, 22 September 2005, Council members heard in informal consultations a briefing by João B. Honwana, Representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau. Mr. Honwana introduced the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/575) regarding the situation in the country and the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS).

Mr. Honwana said that the political situation remained unstable after the presidential elections owing to the refusal of the losing candidate and his supporters, including the Prime Minister, to accept the results. These uncertainties had jeopardized Guinea-Bissau's gains in governance and discouraged international assistance. As for UNOGBIS, Mr. Honwana said that it would maintain its role as a facilitator to sustain peacebuilding activities and efforts at capacity-building. He suggested that the mandate of UNOGBIS be adjusted to the post-transition priorities of enhancing governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

After the meeting, Council members authorized the President to issue a statement to the press, which, among other things, commended the conclusion of the peaceful political transition in Guinea-Bissau and called on the international donor community to remain engaged in Guinea-Bissau as it entered a critical post-electoral phase.

Liberia

At its 5258th meeting, on Monday, 12 September 2005, the Security Council met with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Alan Doss, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, provided the briefing to the meeting. Mr. Doss cited progress achieved in Liberia during the previous year under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, although the peace process still faced challenges. UNMIL's priorities, according to Mr. Doss, would include the preparation for and the conduct of free and fair elections on 11 October 2005.

Following the meeting, Council members considered in informal consultations the report of the Secretary-General on Liberia (S/2005/560). Mr. Doss introduced the Secretary-General's report and provided an update on recent developments. He reiterated the formidable challenges facing the peace process in Liberia, which would require close cooperation among UNMIL, the National Transitional Liberian Government and international partners for Liberia to overcome these challenges.

At its 5263rd meeting, on Monday, 19 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1626 (2005), whereby the Council decided, inter alia, to extend the mandate of UNMIL for another six months, until 31 March 2006, and authorized the Mission to deploy from November 2005 up to 250 military personnel to Sierra Leone to provide security for the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone

On Wednesday, 28 September 2005, Daudi Mwakawago, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, briefed Council members in informal consultations on the latest report of the Secretary-General on Sierra Leone (S/2005/596). Mr. Mwakawago noted that the security situation in the country had continued to improve. On the regional front, Guinea and Sierra Leone had taken steps to resolve their border disputes and that border demarcation would be expected by 3 October 2005.

According to Mr. Mwakawago, UNAMSIL had embarked on a public information campaign to raise awareness in the country about its pending withdrawal and replacement by the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL). The preparations for the launching of UNIOSIL in early 2006 were well advanced.

Council members commended UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone Government for their efforts at consolidating peace and security in the country. They underlined the importance of not allowing the country to relapse into instability and violence. Council members emphasized that the continued engagement of the international community during the peacebuilding phase would be critical to achieve success in Sierra Leone.

Sudan

At its 5265th meeting, on Wednesday, 21 September 2005, the Security Council met with troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). The following officials from UNMIS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council members on the latest developments on the Sudan: Jan Pronk, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the

Sudan; Lt. Gen. Randhir Kuma, Military Adviser (Department of Peacekeeping Operations); Col. Jahanzeb Raja, Chief, Force Generation Service (Department of Peacekeeping Operations); Mark Kroeker, United Nations Police Adviser (Department of Peacekeeping Operations); and Michael Dora, Officer-in-Charge, Logistics Operations (Department of Peacekeeping Operations).

After the meeting, Council members took up in informal consultations the report of the Secretary-General on the Sudan (S/2005/579). Mr. Pronk briefed Council members on, among other things, the short-term priority areas in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which included: the establishment of all of the institutions mentioned in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement during the next six months; resolution of the tension arising from the report of the Abyei Boundaries Commission; stabilization of the situation in southern Sudan arising from the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army; stability in Khartoum, which proved to be at risk owing to the recent death of John Garang; and the promulgation of appropriate laws and legislation under the Constitution to promote democratization.

On Darfur, Mr. Pronk informed Council members that the situation in the region had become less stable owing to recent military activities by both the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). He requested the Council to send a strong message at the next peace talks in Abuja calling for peace in Darfur by the end of 2005. Regarding eastern Sudan, Mr. Pronk believed that peace would also be possible by the end of the year.

Council members expressed concern over the resurgence of violence in Darfur. They believed that progress in the Abuja talks would have a positive effect on the overall peace not only in Darfur, but also in the whole of the Sudan. They hoped that peace would be achieved in eastern Sudan while expressing concern over the increasing activities of the LRA in southern Sudan. Council members supported sending a strong message to the SLM/A and JEM to achieve peace in Darfur by the end of 2005.

At its 5269th meeting, on Friday, 23 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1627 (2005), whereby the Council decided, inter alia, to extend the mandate of UNMIS until 24 March 2006.

On Wednesday, 28 September 2005, Council members authorized the President to issue a press statement (SC/8511) expressing concern over the deteriorating security situation in Darfur due to the resurgence of banditry and violence in the region. They also called for, among other things, a political solution to the conflict and expressed support for the Abuja talks.

Asia

Afghanistan

On Monday, 12 September 2005, the President circulated a letter from the Secretary-General, attached to which was a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan (S/2005/574, annex). In the letter, the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan welcomed the continuation of the operation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) until Afghanistan's security forces could sufficiently provide for the country's security.

At its 5260th meeting, on Tuesday, 13 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1623 (2005) extending the authorization of the ISAF for a period of 12 months beyond 13 October 2005.

On Thursday, 22 September 2005, Council members heard in informal consultations a briefing by Hedi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on the recently concluded parliamentary and provincial elections in Afghanistan.

Mr. Annabi reported that the polling on 18 September 2005 proceeded in an orderly manner and was conducted under a security situation that was better than expected. He said that the initial results would come in a few days, with the tallying of all the votes completed by 8 October 2005. Despite the successful conduct of elections, he said that work for the democratic transition in Afghanistan had not yet been completed and the international community should remain focused on assisting the country in maintaining and building on gains already achieved. Council members welcomed the successful holding of elections in Afghanistan, which completed the Bonn process launched in December 2001.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Council members authorized the President to issue a press statement (SC/8508) on the successful conduct of the parliamentary and provincial elections in Afghanistan.

Iraq

At its 5256th meeting, on Wednesday, 7 September 2005, the Security Council heard a briefing by Paul A. Volcker, Chairman of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme, on the final report of the Committee. The Council also heard statements by the Secretary-General and by the representative of Iraq.

At its 5266th meeting, on Wednesday, 21 September 2005, the Security Council heard a briefing from Ashraf Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, who introduced the report of the Secretary-General on Iraq (S/2005/585). The representative of the United States of America also reported on the progress of the activities of the Multinational Force. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, made a statement at the meeting.

At its 5267th meeting, also on Wednesday, 21 September 2005, the Security Council resumed its consideration of the situation concerning Iraq with the participation of Mr. Zebari and Mr. Qazi. At the meeting, Council members expressed general satisfaction at the approval of the draft constitution by the Iraqi people and noted the progress made in the political process in Iraq. They expressed concern, however, over the ongoing violence in the country caused by insurgent attacks.

Middle East

At its 5270th meeting, on Friday, 23 September 2005, the Security Council heard a briefing on the situation in the Middle East from Alvaro de Soto, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General. Mr. de Soto briefed the Council on Israel's withdrawal of its military personnel and installations from the Gaza Strip. He also highlighted the

results of the meeting of the Quartet, which met at the Ministerial level on 20 September 2005.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the President read out a statement (S/PRST/2005/44) in support of the 20 September statement by the Quartet. In the statement, the Council called for renewed action in parallel by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority on their obligations in accordance with the Roadmap and stressed, among other things, the importance of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

On Wednesday, 28 September 2005, Council members asked the President to issue a press statement condemning the attempted assassination of May Chidiac, a journalist in Lebanon.

International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

At its 5273rd meeting, on Friday, 30 September 2005, the Security Council, taking note of the letter of the Secretary-General (S/2005/593), adopted resolution 1629 (2005) assigning Judge Christine Van Den Wyngaert as a permanent judge to the Mrksic, et al., case to commence on 3 October 2005.

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

On Tuesday, 6 September 2005, Council members considered in informal consultations the twenty-second quarterly report of UNMOVIC (S/2005/545). Demetrius Perricos, Acting Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, introduced the report.

Mr. Perricos highlighted the question of closing Iraq's disarmament file and whether the Council would decide to re-establish some form of monitoring mechanism after that process. He reiterated that UNMOVIC, with its expertise, could still be utilized should the Council decide to establish another monitoring mechanism to assist Iraq to set up an implementation system. Mr. Perricos also reported on the progress of the ongoing programmes of UNMOVIC to fulfil its mandate.

Security Council report to the General Assembly

At its 5262nd meeting, on Monday, 19 September 2005, the Security Council unanimously adopted its annual report to the General Assembly covering the period from 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 (S/2005/582).

Security Council Summit

On Friday, 2 September 2005, the Security Council agreed to hold a meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government on 14 September 2005 to discuss "Threats to international peace and security" (S/2005/562). Following the meeting, Council members authorized the President to issue a press statement on the matter.

At its 5261st meeting, on Wednesday, 14 September 2005, the Security Council held a meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government and unanimously adopted resolution 1624 (2005) calling upon all States to prohibit by law incitement to commit terrorist acts and to continue international efforts to enhance dialogue among civilizations in the fight against terrorism, and resolution 1625 (2005) on strengthening the Council's role in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. Fourteen Heads of State and Government and one Foreign Minister attended the historic meeting. H.E. Mrs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, President of the Republic of the Philippines, chaired the meeting.

Thematic debate

At its 5264th meeting, on Tuesday, 20 September 2005, the Security Council held an open debate on "The role of civil society in conflict prevention and the pacific settlement of disputes". At the end of the meeting, the President read out a statement (S/PRST/2005/42) on the complex nature of threats to international peace and security and the potential contributions of a vibrant and diverse civil society in conflict prevention, as well as peaceful settlement of disputes.